

Educational Supplement

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Break

Manners maketh motorway

Strange things have been happening in Winchester this summer, and one of the strangest was the sight of the headmaster of Winchester College, John Thorne, being asked to leave a public meeting that had teetered well over the edge into violence.

Even odder, to some, was the fact that on the issue about which he was protesting—the manner in which the proposed line of the M3 had been decided—he had the almost unanimous backing of the Winchester common room, a body which can usually be counted on to split right down the middle on any issue.

This time, both town and gown are up in arms over what, in a happy oxymoron, the Bishop of Winchester describes as the "violence of silence", threatens to let the Department of the Environment's bulldozers build a ten-lane motorway through the college water meadows where Keats composed the "Ode to Autumn" and which many citizens refer to as their "southern lung".

Such a violent reaction has not been seen in college since the rebellion of 1793 (in the reign of Warden Hunningdon) when the "red flag of liberty" fluttered over Middle Gate and half the stones of Chamber Court were taken up for ammunition.

The flames of democratic protest may have been fanned by this unfortunate affair earlier this year of the manuscript of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. The college's other national treasure, it was regarded by certain admirers as priceless until it was sold by the warden and fellows for £150,000.

The price fetched was put into perspective by the response of Old Wykehamists to the M3 appeal. They managed to raise, in a very short space of time, a sum not far short of this towards the cost of the lawyers' and consultants' fees incurred by the Winchester M3 Joint Action Group.

The parallels between Malory and the M3 have not escaped veterans

who have campaigned on both issues. They continue to mutter darkly about railroading, closed doors and consultation.

Everyone, however, is swelling with pride that Winchester should be fighting on an issue of national and historic moment. Even in the school are reported to have been stimulated by the sight of their own ministers stamping and shouting. One don has predicted that a generation of politically aware Wykehamists will emerge as a result of the inquiry. This has not happened to his knowledge since the 1930s.

Mr Thorne, whose confrontation with the unfortunate DoE Inspector, Major General Raymond Edge, was nicely timed to achieve maximum notoriety (or respectability) for the campaign, is taking the glare of publicity well. It is a far happier campaign than the Malory one (which, predictably, split the common room 27/27) and he is not blind to its educational value. And he and his school have not had to suffer the sort of adverse publicity which would doubtless have attended their action had they been deemed teachers from a comprehensive.

When it is Winchester, the whole affair can be seen as a way of realizing the hope Mr Thorne expressed as head of Ripon, shortly after his appointment to Winchester: involving senior boys in discussions about authority "may help to send them out not just as potential managers, technologists or professional men, but as people, who as students inevitably endowed with power, will have responsible ideas about how to use it".

Summer gleaning

Alan Beith's appointment as education spokesman for the Liberal Party was announced last week. He replaces Clement Freud whose contribution will be missed, if not for its profundity at least for its pious levity.

Mr Beith will combine the education portfolio with his job as chief whip—"all Liberal MPs work very



Mr Beith

hard". His summer will be spent nursing his Berwick upon Tweed constituency, which he won in a by-election in 1973 and now holds with a majority of 73, and meeting Liberal education groups. He will be planning ideas and opinions to be put into the party now so that some informed debate can be mounted at the autumn party conference. "There are a great many Liberals involved in education. It provokes discussion in the party almost more than any other issue."

The Liberals are supporting the Government over the Comprehensive Bill. Seeking always a balance between the fairest possible distribution of opportunity and resources on one side and the maximum possible choice for parents on the other, they have, Mr Beith explained, decided that for the time being they must lend their weight to the side of fairness.

The sort of education issue on which Mr Beith hopes the Liberal Party can be effective is in preventing the "injurious" use of resources. He hopes, for example, to reverse what he describes as the trend "to reward people more and more on condition they give up teaching". In other words he wants it made more profitable for senior teachers to stay in classrooms.

As so often seems to be the case, with such appointments, Mr Beith's principal qualifications for the education portfolio are that his wife is a teacher (secondary, biology) and that he was a university lecturer (Newcastle University, politics). He is a member of the Association of University Teachers and still acts as an external examiner at Newcastle Polytechnic and for the local government training board. As to his own education: King's School, Macclesfield, Balliol and Nuffield.

Her apparent?

Harvey Hinds, chairman of the Junior London Education Authority's schools subcommittee, may decide that the strength of feeling in the Labour group is so strong that he should resign, despite the group's vote of confidence in him. After all seven members of the group voted against him and others abstained, despite the group's decision not to hold a ballot on the vote of confidence in him.

Should he resign, who will succeed him? The vice-chairman of the committee, though vice-chairman, is by no means automatic successor on such occasions—might be a likely candidate.

Mrs Mary-Lou Clarke has been vice-chairman of the schools subcommittee only since May, but already she has a formidable reputation on the ILA, having been a member of Hamroemith borough council since 1971. She is chairman of their housing utilisation committee ("horrible name") which deals with tenants' associations, manage-



"Please sir, I found it in the gutter."

ment of housing, "grass roots things of that sort"—including the state of the grass.

Mrs Clarke is also Tony Benn's political and constituency secretary, a job which happily, in view of the work involved in the schools subcommittee just now, has become more part-time since he has been back in government.

Her own schooling was muddled. Evacuated to New York during the war, she went to the original Dalton School, which she describes as "smashing", but when she returned to London at the age of 11 she was sent to a progressive school that was rather less inspiring, King Alfred's School, Hampstead.

"It was a bum school then. We were taught by a lot of ex-actors from the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. It was a real example of what happens when you run a progressive school without the back up... I left with a poor school certificate without matriculation exemption. That was the sum total of my formal education."

Impeccable rebel

Parent power is all the rage these days particularly when linked to the hot issue of standards. One recent manifestation of the phenomena comes from Oxfordshire where two months of simmering are likely to result in a joint statement from the governors of Milham Ford Girls' School (reorganized upper school—ex girls' grammar) and the local authority saying that Martin Cole's film, *Growing Up*, should not be shown again in school. The head will, however, receive support rather than reprimand from her governors, to the chagrin of some of the more militant of the protesting parents.

The film was shown in the school to sixth-formers as part of a general studies course, which included such

topics as fears and phobias, aid, alcoholism, social medicine—and this was where the film in—sex education for teenagers. All was carefully planned, parents were told, etc.

However, the film was shown to a small group of girls of inquiring mind who asked about such matters at the time, when the film was in the school, and it was not until the film was shown to the parents, not until it was said, with the Festival of Vernon Huddon, vice-chair of the education committee, leading Conservative council Oxfordshire.

The impeccable reputation of the head, Miss W. M. Lane, the school, has been drawn into the mire of any campaigning. Mr Huddon, firmly of the view that such a view should not be shown in school, does not want to require the most delicate of these things can be very sensitive, they can release very serious kind.

He also thinks the issue with the general political over standards in state schools is a good opportunity for the right of parents to say what is done in schools. But his heart is not in any real campaign in this instance, he hopes the future will subside the governor's statement.

Down under

Geoffrey Cason, registrar of the University, one of the unsuccessful candidates for the job of education officer of the Inner London Education Authority, has gone to Australia for three weeks. He is to be on holiday. It is mid-summer there.

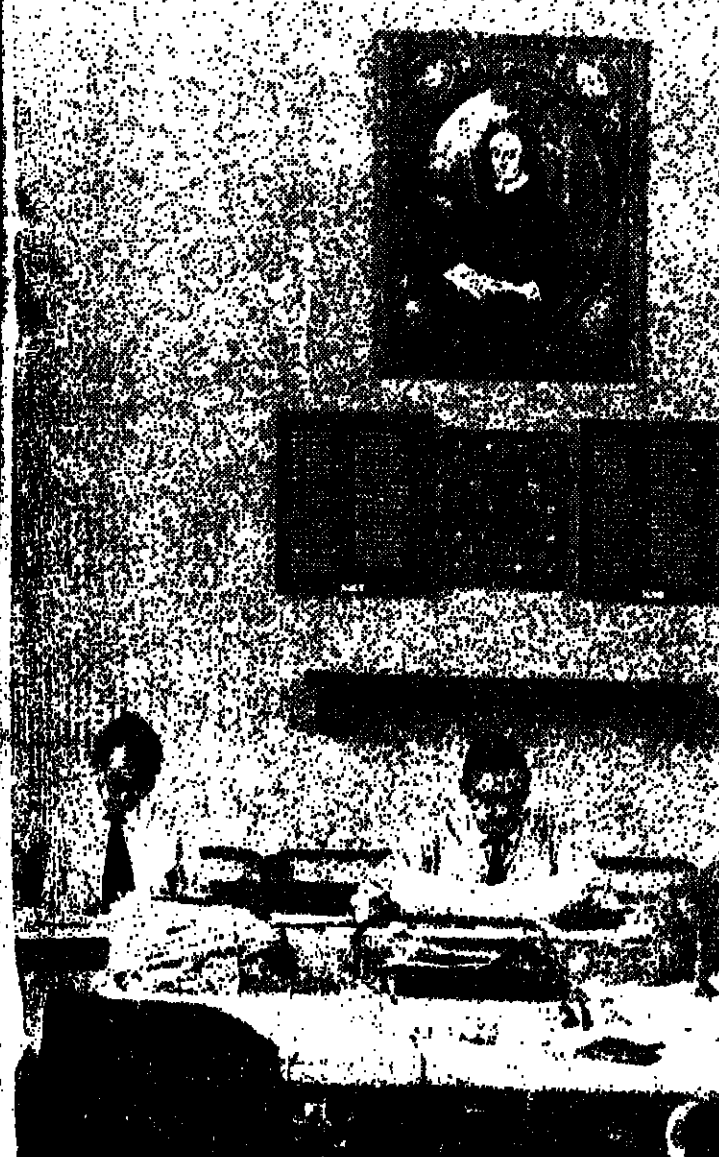
Mr Cason is said to be a member of the ILA, having asked a friend to put his name down for one of the short list, close to regard his request that it should be.

Next week

Who are the progressives now? Julian Brotherhood on the role of the pioneer progressive schools; Frances Farrer on Durrington Hall; Mark Featherstone-Witty on Scotland's first free school.

Frances Hill on the modern family; Shirley Toulson on this year's Poetry International.

Books: Ralph Laver on teaching literature; Dilip Datta on Pakistani families in Bristol; history textbooks.



Marking time: as pupils wait anxiously for O and A level results to be announced, Stephen Cohen visits one exam board to see how they mark, moderate, set standards and award certificates. Above, the Cambridge Syndicate's senior examiners in O level English at work. Report page 8. Pictures, Rado Klose.

Summer at Tyndale

As the school shuts for six weeks, the next chapter opens. Both teachers and administrators prepare to face disciplinary action. Here Lodge reports page 4

Save it

Local authorities are told to do their sums yet again to save £250m from their planned spending this year. Education will overspend by £70m, the Government says. page 5

Parent power

Taylor recommendations will ease out both L.A.s and teachers in favour of parents. Here Lodge reports page 5

Border country

A report from the north of England says A level standards have stayed steady for the past 13 years. But there are serious doubts about the data used to reach this conclusion because the 1963 scripts studied by the researchers were only the borderline cases and not a fair sample of all the candidates. page 5

Fight goes on

"The battle is by no means over" warned Mr St John-Stevens last week when the Education Bill was sent to the House of Lords after the Government had applied the guillotine in the Commons. page 9



Down in the forest

The Woodcote Folk, a young people's organization, have denied allegations that they are a left-wing political group. They have accused Conservative Central Office of trying to discredit them and plan to fight Tory-controlled councils who have turned down applications for groups and reclassified them as a political group. Frances Steddie reports. page 10

Equal to what?

Robert Wood on the difficulties of achieving comparability between exams. page 2

Handing on the progressive torch

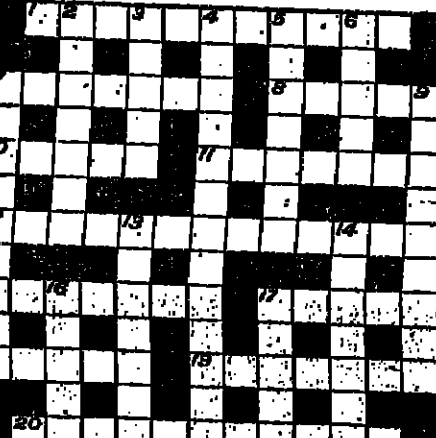
In whose hands does the progressive flame burn today? Julian Brotherhood suggests that the pioneer progressives are no longer the front-runners. Frances Farrer looks at Dartington Hall's track record after 50 years; and Mark Featherstone-Witty finds out how Kilquahilly House, Scotland's "first free school", is faring. pages 15-17

Inside the nuclear nest

Frances Hill looks at changing ideas of family life page 18

Letters, pages 12, 13	Books, pages 19-21	and scientific revolution; Frances Steddie on puppets.
Borderline languages: A level subject writing. Viewpoint and the ILEA Maths teacher; good and bad heads; Mr Mulley's arithmetic; the 16-plus ARA history syllabus; choice of books.	Ralph Laver on children and literature; Dilip Datta on Pakistani children; Frances Hill on handwriting; Heather Noll on theatre; John Gwynn on cinema; Frances Hill on handicraft; Louise Jefferys; page 21; Personal column, page 4; In brief; children's literature, history textbooks.	Art's Reviews, pages 38-39
Foreign, page 11	Talkback, page 23	Nad Thomas on the Spanish Civil War; Heather Noll on theatre; John Gwynn on cinema; Frances Hill on handicraft; Louise Jefferys; page 21; Personal column, page 4; In brief; children's literature, history textbooks.
Australia: Professor Peter Karmel, director of Australian education, discusses the likely impact of three impending major government reports; France: William Farr on parental power; United States: Mr Carter's running mate welcomed as a "liberal"	Resources, page 27	Jaques Bromwich and David Howarth on the Renaissance, the Reformation.
		Classified ad index

Crossword No 1,043



- Across**
- Does it go head down at the church? (5, 6)
 - Colourful knot of the watered silk? (7)
 - Without a continuous version (5)
 - They run out in time (5)
 - It's a bit thick for the actor (7)
 - Doing a double circuit? (7, 8)
- Down**
- One of an eight can only function in opposition (7)
 - Ask an order of probability about a 1,042
 - West a bit for the national trousers (5)
 - A little, 40 to speak (7)
 - Read apocryphal for the novel? (5, 6)
 - By tradition a crossing place for light-footed pedestrians (7)

- Raiment for revolutionary Pierre (5)
- Where Jack waits for the wood to arrive (7, 8)
- Does he go about his courtship area in a dogcart? (7)
- Laboriously gets what he deserves (5)
- The others surround the train for a check (9)
- Performance by a saboteur? (4, 5)
- Modern youthful fashion? (2, 5)
- Preliminary to throwing down the gauntlet (7)
- Base of many an island story (5)
- Home patch for Broe Rabbit (5)

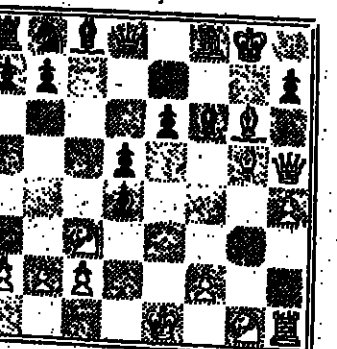
Chess

Perils of the French Defence

In a recent book on the French Defence the former world champion, Botvinnik, has observed that no one is a genuine master of the game unless he knows how to play the French Defence. In some further remarks he does go on to modify a little the harsh confines of this proviso and one realizes that he really means that no one can play like Botvinnik unless he can play the French Defence well.

Nevertheless, if we were to take his first statement at face value I doubt whether any of us would be regarded as masters. The trouble is that, very good though the French Defence is, it is awfully difficult to play it well. And the reason for this is that, while, like all good and sound defences, it is also a counter-attack, this counter-attack is a delayed one. This in turn means that there is a most anxious period to surmount before one can get the counter-attack going, and in the interim one might well succumb to White's onslaught.

One of the chief obstacles in Black's way is that, since the QB is shut in by the KP, there is a slowness in the development of his Q side pieces. Take the following brief



Position after White's 13th move

10. KtP3 followed by 11. KtP3 gives White a most fierce attack.
- Possibly overlooking reply which White's KtP3 contains a strong attack, but 5. KtP3 is also very bad for Black.
- Or 13. KtP3; 14. QP3; 15. QP3; 16. QP3; 17. QP3; 18. KtP3 and White wins.
- Now if 14. KtP3; 15. QP3; 16. QP3; 17. QP3; 18. KtP3; 19. QP3; 20. QP3; 21. QP3; 22. QP3; 23. QP3; 24. QP3; 25. QP3; 26. QP3; 27. QP3; 28. QP3; 29. QP3; 30. QP3; 31. QP3; 32. QP3; 33. QP3; 34. QP3; 35. QP3; 36. QP3; 37. QP3; 38. QP3; 39. QP3; 40. QP3; 41. QP3; 42. QP3; 43. QP3; 44. QP3; 45. QP3; 46. QP3; 47. QP3; 48. QP3; 49. QP3; 50. QP3; 51. QP3; 52. QP3; 53. QP3; 54. QP3; 55. QP3; 56. QP3; 57. QP3; 58. QP3; 59. QP3; 60. QP3; 61. QP3; 62. QP3; 63. QP3; 64. QP3; 65. QP3; 66. QP3; 67. QP3; 68. QP3; 69. QP3; 70. QP3; 71. QP3; 72. QP3; 73. QP3; 74. QP3; 75. QP3; 76. QP3; 77. QP3; 78. QP3; 79. QP3; 80. QP3; 81. QP3; 82. QP3; 83. QP3; 84. QP3; 85. QP3; 86. QP3; 87. QP3; 88. QP3; 89. QP3; 90. QP3; 91. QP3; 92. QP3; 93. QP3; 94. QP3; 95. QP3; 96. QP3; 97. QP3; 98. QP3; 99. QP3; 100. QP3; 101. QP3; 102. QP3; 103. QP3; 104. QP3; 105. QP3; 106. QP3; 107. QP3; 108. QP3; 109. QP3; 110. QP3; 111. QP3; 112. QP3; 113. QP3; 114. QP3; 115. QP3; 116. QP3; 117. QP3; 118. QP3; 119. QP3; 120. QP3; 121. 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QP3; 6

Black professor warns of racial dangers in UK schools

by Frances Stadler

Black children's reactions to racism should be openly examined in schools both for the children's benefit and because race relations in Britain will otherwise deteriorate. They must be given the opportunity to explore their own cultural origins and history and their own reactions to discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding.

These are the main conclusions of a study on how teachers in inner London schools understand the relationship between multi-racial education and social deprivation. It was commissioned by the Inner London Education Authority and the Runnymede Trust who plan to publish it later.

The study was carried out by Professor Raymond Giles, professor of education at Smith College, Massachusetts. He is black and went to school and later taught in Harlem before researching into black studies in the United States and Britain.

He interviewed heads and teachers in 25 London infant, primary and secondary schools with working-class and multi-racial pupils. He concentrated on teachers' attitudes to West Indian children.

Professor Giles says that black children must be actively helped to overcome racism. For example, they should be allowed to study their own history and origins. Failure to do this can only lead to further isolation and hostility which in turn will breed separatism and racial division.

Many teachers saw the pattern of racial integration in their areas as just another part of the poverty and deprivation experienced by disadvantaged white children. This view was reinforced by the Government's decision to lump the different needs of white working-class and ethnic minority children together.

The policy was to treat all children the same. Less emphasis was placed on the causes of poverty which can be high social injustice and racial prejudice. Some teachers objected to racial distinctions because, they claimed, it encouraged people to categorize and think condescendingly.

Most schools in the study were not as concerned to help black children overcome class barriers as to help them integrate into the white working class.

However, many teachers admitted that whereas no disadvantaged white children were held back because they were white, many black children were held back

because they were black. Prejudice and discrimination had consigned them to the lowest socio-economic group.

Professor Giles argues that this social disadvantage is caused because black children have no choice to be in any other social setting.

Most heads and teachers were sensitive and defensive when discussing multi-racial education. They had had little previous contact with children of other cultures, no special training and no firm guidelines to work on.

They hoped that black children would settle down and be able to recognize their own worth because of the value schools placed upon them as human beings. However many teachers had realized that this was not enough and had started black studies courses.

Even those teachers who still thought no distinctive treatment or special programmes were necessary agreed that the cultural background of West Indian children created learning and adjustment difficulties.

One West Indian headmistress said progressive methods clashed with the strict and firm approach of many black parents. She wanted more formality: "Children need to be taught how to choose, not to choose."

Another head thought that West Indian children played up white teachers because they were often permissive and inconsistent, asking children not to misbehave with a smile. In one school with many disruptive West Indians the one teacher who kept order was West Indian and had an "outright strict colonial attitude".

White teachers often took open or extreme expressions of feeling by West Indian children too seriously. Their sensitivity to race relations could often get their confidence. Most of the children they referred to therapists or psychologists were diagnosed as normal and average.

Although several schools ran black studies programmes, there was generally confusion about their purpose and content. Most teachers said they had a general but rather ill-defined appreciation of the need of West Indian children to search for their identity as black people.

Professor Giles was disappointed that only two schools mentioned the need to develop skills that would help children to fight racism and discrimination. Most black studies programmes which dodged the real issue by focusing

on the history and culture of the victims of injustice rather than examining how racism is practiced and what blacks must do to beat it.

One head who had given the matter a lot of thought said black children must come to terms with the reality of life in England. Black studies was not the way to achieve this. Too many children used race as an excuse for not succeeding. She would not shy away from racial issues but nor would she start a discussion. She made demands on her children and deliberately did not give them a break, telling them to try harder.

Those infant and primary schools which were making a special effort did so through activities that did not need any change in their syllabus. They aimed to make all children aware of other cultures and customs.

In many schools there was a gap between policy and practice. In some, where integration and tolerance were the goals, the emphasis on race and culture was played down. An extreme example was the teacher who could not bring himself to use the word "black" to describe a child.

In his recommendations, Professor Giles suggests moves which would mean changing the syllabus. Parents should be brought in more so that there is less conflict between home and school. Textbooks should be vetted to make sure they do not ignore or denigrate ethnic groups, and there should be lessons in special language and the history and culture of ethnic groups.

Although several secondary schools ran well organized black studies courses, Professor Giles found that none of them knew much about what was going on in other schools. More discussion about the direction of multi-racial education is needed.

In a recent article published in *Educational Research*, Miss Elaine Brittan, a research officer at the National Foundation for Educational Research, who kept order was West Indian and had an "outright strict colonial attitude".

More than three-quarters of a sample of 500 teachers from multi-racial areas said West Indian children usually behaved worse than white children of English origin. Most thought that West Indian pupils took punishment less well and that they lowered academic standards.

Multi-racial Education. By Elaine Brittan. Educational Research Volume XIX, The Merit, Upton Park, Slough, Buckinghamshire.

PAT conference

Road to the top is not paved with chalk

by Stephen Cohen

The career structure in education encourages teachers to escape from the classroom, said Margaret Miles, former head of Mayfield School, London, this week.

She told the annual conference of the Professional Association of Teachers, that success in teaching meant becoming a non-teaching head, an inspector, an administrator or even a college of education lecturer.

The teaching profession, she said, would not be united so long as the best teachers were encouraged to move out of the classroom. The career pattern was one of the biggest impediments to professionalism. The annual conference, in Coventry, was the biggest organized by the 10,000-strong association. More than 150 delegates attended for two days of debate and discussion.

The association, which has as its central philosophy the belief that teachers should never go on strike, claims to be the moderate voice of teachers. The conference order paper reflected this attitude with short, one-sentence resolutions, while the debates made up in breadth what they lacked in content.

An improvement in the standards of mathematics teaching in primary and secondary schools was called for by the delegates after Mr Michael Best, from Hereford and Worcester, had said that many teachers were leaving the profession because of a 42 per cent of students in colleges of education intending to teach do not have O level maths.

Mrs Mary Tyrrell Gray, Farnham, said there was a lot of gimmickry in teacher training. Some students could not add, subtract or multiply. An emergency motion on William Tyndale school expressed concern at attempts by politicians to curtail the powers of heads. This was carried by 50 votes to 32, but the large number of abstentions reflected the doubts felt by many P.A.T. members at the events at William Tyndale.

Mr Corinna's amendment was carried by 53 votes to 21. It was a motion for in-service training courses on the never-ending technicalities of the P.A.T. code of conduct on reading to monthly meetings, Mr Ian Mitchell Lamb, chairman, said this week. The course was open to all teachers. More than 60 per cent of participants were women. Mr Lambert, who was member of the teacher unions.

The association is expanding its in-service training activities and will run a mathematics course in Liverpool in the autumn and one in discipline and disruptive children later this year.

Small four to challenge big two

A federation of small teacher associations is being planned to weaken the dominance of the two major unions, the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters-Union of Women Teachers.

Four associations—the Association of Career Teachers, Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (National

A general teaching council demanded by Mrs Violet Brown from Tameside. A council was to prevent politics and education at variance, she said, and might prevent the row over selection in Tameside.

After the debate, the Tameside delegation said they hoped all teacher unions would now work to the authority's scheme to give pupils for grammar schools.

One of the liveliest debates concerned the recent occupational colleges by students unable to find jobs in schools. The original motive for the conference did not concern occupational behaviour, but an amendment proposed by Mr Corinna, from Manchester, said the P.A.T. should make no comment on the situation since they were best left to the students' own consciences.

Mr Mike Woolston, from Humberdale, said P.A.T. plan to create jobs—a £1 levy on teachers, increases in school prices and a war on vandals—were the best way of dealing with unemployment.

Miss Diane Coles, Merion, said the association had to stand up to standards and help students who were being persuaded into military action by extremists.

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Teachers. They have a common bond; they are not members of the TUC and are unlikely to seek affiliation to it.

Jobs fears for young blacks in Midlands

by Asif Khan

A Birmingham meat-processing firm which had invited applications for jobs from school-leavers told a group of officers that their white employees would walk out if a boy with an Indian name was employed, says a report by the West Midlands Regional Committee of the Race Relations Board.

The boy, who was born in Jamaica to an Indian father and an English mother, told a white friend of his that the firm's management was a racist. The friend told the committee.

The report, which was published last week, also says that a West Indian youth was refused a job by a company in Dudley, Worcester.

In both cases the committee obtained written assurances from the employers against racial discrimination in the future, as well as compensation of £75 for one boy and £250 for the other for loss of earnings.

The committee which covers Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and the metropolitan county of West Midlands, is one of nine regional committees set up by the Race Relations Board to secure compliance with the 1968 Race Relations Act.

It says that a "substantial discrimination" still exists in white-collar and managerial jobs, especially if there is competition. The difficulties of coloured school-leavers and other young people belonging to the ethnic minorities are being the committee great concern.

Many of these difficulties have arisen, it says, because "we, as a nation, have failed to rise to the challenge of a multi-racial society."

"We have lacked the foresight to make plans for the day when these young and third generation of British blacks would expect and demand the same opportunities of employment, of selection for appointments, and of service and treatment in shops, restaurants and hotels in the same way as their white counterparts."

"We continue to fail to extend the opportunity to them, we fail to recognize the need for a change in the way of thinking, and increasingly one of race and complete alienation."

"We are convinced that affirmative action and less talk now will mean solid foundations for the future. It is the equal opportunity policy in which our children of all races will be able to live in harmony."

The committee have discussed with career officers ways in which the employment could be improved in the field of employment.

The report notes with satisfaction that three firms have taken affirmative action, among them the owners, Butlers, a subsidiary of the brewers, Bass Charrington, which has undertaken to include in its recruitment a standard of "backgrounds". It had worked successfully in Lancashire in a model project organized by the I.E.A.



The children's choir from Hongkong file out of St Paul's Cathedral after their first London recital.

Trouble over oral tests on tape

by Bob Doe

Taped orals instead of visits by examiners have been severely criticized by two teachers who assess the pupils in O level French.

In the latest edition of the journal of the Modern Languages Association, Miss Sheila Newman and Miss Betty Tew say that contact with an experienced, well-briefed examiner is preferable to a secondhand recording made under less than ideal conditions by indifferent interviewers.

After two years' experience as examiners with this method, they say one of the major drawbacks is the need for near perfect recording conditions. They have been "brought in the verge of insanity" by extraneous noises, such as ringing bells, low-flying aircraft and nearby classes, which frequently totally obliterated a candidate's utterances.

In one case a breeze from an open window made the interview seem as if it took place on a mountain in a gale, while other tapes appeared to have been made while under mortar fire.

They also missed the facial expressions and gestures that could clarify speech. "An assessor deprived of such natural conversational components may often find himself desperately playing and re-playing a section of tape in a vain attempt to decipher a child's real meaning."

Some teachers were too garrulous or too taciturn to conduct orals successfully, others could not work the machinery. "More than one candidate has, unfortunately, been called upon to re-sit all or part of an oral examination because of a defective tape-recorder." Teachers sometimes forget to identify candidates on the tape.

Because of all this, the expected increase in fairness, with the examiner able to replay and plan down the flooding word and assess performances more systematically, has not occurred. Some candidates, as much as re-examine with their

class teacher as with an examiner. Only a minority were confident in their relationship with the teacher, who tended to treat differently pupils they knew to be good or bad at the language to be tested.

Taped orals should only be used in emergencies, such as for a candidate who is ill on the day of the examination. Miss Newman said this week: "We were appalled at what could go wrong. I cannot see any advantage in the taped interview. Pupils are far better off with the old method."

The Joint Matriculation Board say 11,549 taped orals were used last year and 29,078 candidates had conventional orals in O level French. In German 7,055 met the examiners and 3,632 were taped. The Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate also use taped orals, or internal orals as they call them. This summer 14,900 candidates faced the external examiner while 3,900 had internal orals in French. In German there were 4,800 external and 1,100 internal orals.

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Inter-Faith plea for harmony

Teachers must accept responsibility for developing a harmonious, multi-cultural society, says the Bishop of Exeter, in a statement issued at the end of his annual conference in Birmingham last week.

They call upon parents, teachers and educational administrators to play a more positive part in cultivating "a sympathetic understanding of minority cultures and their problems and values".

Education authorities should encourage teachers and parents of different origins to talk to one another and to learn about each other's backgrounds. It had worked successfully in Lancashire in a model project organized by the I.E.A.

How to stay in touch

The crisis facing education is about the relevance of curriculum content, rather than standards, according to Mr Christopher Orrell, director of the Schools Council Sixth Form Mathematics Project.

Writing in the latest edition of *Educational Research*, published by the National Foundation for Educational Research, he says the most important factor in the justification of modern education is the lack of an agreed theory of what ought to be included.

He argues that both the arts and sciences of the traditional curriculum neglect pupils' major point of contact with reality—the artefacts and systems of man-made environment. The human world of the arts could not be understood without a study of the man-made world, nor could the development of the sciences and the rise of technology.

Education should ask questions which made sense to pupils, and most of these would occur in the man-made world. Such relevance would lead to greater achievement by all.

Pupils try out Esperanto

Twenty Polish children were staying at Alwood Comprehensive School in Maidenhead this week, not to improve their English but to try out their Esperanto.

Mr M. A. Edwards, the headmaster, is an enthusiast for an international language. He believes that only Esperanto for their daily requirements and parents did not know the language. The Alwood children will be returning the visit to Sopot in Poland next year.

Mr Edwards said Esperanto, besides being the only international language as available, was easy to learn for pupils in the middle ability range. It was also a good introduction to the structure of language. Though it was looked down upon as a poor relation in Britain, language. "We are going to find out if children with a not very great knowledge of it can communicate," said Mr Edwards.

Morale boost

There have been a many classroom reforms and innovations but it is no wonder teachers do not know which way to turn, Mr Mervyn Wigram, HM staff inspector for modern languages, told the annual conference of the National Association of Language Advisers in Watford last weekend. What was needed was a list of educational priorities.

Expansion and progress must be based on existing success to restore the language teachers' morale. Advisers should give priority to the sixth form, the grade in which future language teachers would be born.

ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

From August 9-12 inclusive* there will be an exhibition of books and materials for English Language Teaching at

The Orchard Music Room,
Westfield College,
Kilburn Avenue,
London NW3

The exhibition is organised in conjunction with The English Language Summer School, by the BBC English by Radio, International House and The English Speaking Union.

A special inset on English as a Foreign Language will be included in next week's Times Educational Supplement.

*Exhibition open:

10.00-13.00—14.00-19.00

Monday to Wednesday

10.00-13.00—14.00-17.00

Thursday

UKRA conference

Researchers and realists at odds

The reading researcher and the classroom teacher often behave like Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. The researcher was the realist, using so many long words that the teacher retreated into the common-sense position of the realist.

This was the view of Mr John Gilliland in his opening speech at the 13th annual United Kingdom Reading Association conference in Durham this week. Improving classroom practice and research is this year's theme and in his presidential address Mr Gilliland gave some reasons why there was a gap between them.

Teachers often asked the wrong questions—such as "What are I to do?"—since research did not exist to provide a *vade mecum* for the classroom. Researchers, on the other hand, treated their empirical methods as a truth-generating machine, which was not helpful in education. He felt there was danger in educational research that the problem and the method might pass each other by without ever meeting.

Mr Gilliland also said teachers often used terms inaccurately, treating "illiterate", "semi-literate" and "reading-arrested" as synonymous, while researchers were trying to refine definitions. The two sides were separated by a common language, but it was a researcher who had described the teacher as a

Picking a way through the language maze

If spoken language is our mother tongue, written language is our father tongue, and teachers of reading should be aware of the parental discord as well as the harmony between the two, according to Dr Joyce Morris, a language arts consultant.

Spoken language was like a maze. Speakers sometimes stumbled on the right way and occasionally chose according to reason. Dr Morris emphasized the variety of spoken language according to dialect, occasion and interests. Whenever teachers hear the phrase "natural language", they should always ask "whose natural language?"

There was no research evidence

to support the Bullock report's statement that the language structure of children's spoken structures. In fact, there were many evidences that children were very flexible at "code-switching". Dr Morris felt it was up to teachers to be knowledgeable about the differences between children's spoken codes and help children build a bridge between the two.

Adults reading problems were also discussed. Professor John Merritt of the Open University, said a society where instructions for pastry required a reading age of 12, and family income supplement claim forms a reading age of 17, demanded a high standard of literacy. But American research had

shown that two-thirds of 12-year-olds and one-third of 18-year-olds failed to understand an ordinary newspaper article.

Professor Merritt pointed out that for most adult reading, nothing like 100 per cent accuracy was required. "If you want to go to the dentist and you end up in Crown, it is a good saying that your reading of the train timetable was 99 per cent correct."

A student at the Open University had unnecessarily taken a whole year's foundation course because of misreading instructions. (However exaggerated some reports of illiteracy might be, Professor Merritt said, there were no grounds for optimism or complacency among teachers of reading.)

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IEA maths standard 'an insult'

Inner London Education is attacked for encouraging standards of primary school maths in the latest issue of its own teachers' magazine.

Mr Alfred Levy, head of mathematics at St Paul's Way School, a comprehensive for 1,200 pupils in Bow, East London, writes in the magazine: "The standards of arithmetic of secondary schools are seriously deteriorated. This is because primary schools fail to give pupils a proper grounding in basic skills and the standards which are set are too low."

Mr Levy studied 240 pupils who were expected to sit the 50 questions required for arithmetic at all. The questions which tested the ability to manipulate number were at level of difficulty of 32 plus 9, 24 minus 5.

"This year the greatest test of a child's ability to add numbers was a written test. A child could subtract

44.47% from £13.24 and 90 per cent (22.01) could not multiply £3.27 by 4.

"I believe that the causes of failure in mathematics lie overwhelmingly in the infant and junior schools and that the downward trend can only be reversed by putting the children back to carefully structured daily work."

Since the end of the 11-plus, the target set by the authority's target for primary school maths has been the comparability tests used by the National Foundation for Educational Research when they standardized these tests on a comparable group of pupils elsewhere in the country.

"I find much to disagree with in this article," Mr Buxton said, though he was not prepared to detail his objections. The IEA expects a lot of primary schools. The pected a lot of primary schools. The pected a lot of primary schools. The pected a lot of primary schools.

graph work were included.

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David Wilkie (on winner's rostrum): "Had I gone to a British university I would have quit swimming."

David Wilkie, Olympic gold medallist, talks about the lack of opportunity for student athletes in Britain. Stan Levenson reports

If it's gold you're after, go west

MONTREAL Being a student is no handicap in the Montreal gold rush. So many students have won medals in the contests, particularly swimming and gymnastics, that this Olympic could be sub-titled, "The World Student Games." In many swimming finals every one of the eight was a student.

The women's 100 metres breaststroke and individual medley, the men's 500 metres backstroke and 1,500 metres relay are examples. And, of course, the gymnastics was dominated by students or schoolgirls.

The most publicized of these students have been British swimmer David Wilkie, who at Christmas will end three years at Miami University, American backstroke gold medallist John Naber, at the University of Southern California, East German swimmer extraordinary Kornelia Ender, at high school in Halle, and that incredibly self-assured 14-year-old gymnast, Nadia Comaneci, who is in the ninth form of her school in the town of Gheorghiu-Dez, Romania.

From a British point of view there was a medallist in an unexpected sport—cycling. Ian Barber, an 18-year-old student from Haniel House, Hertfordshire, won a bronze in the team pursuit. Apart from Nottingham dentist Ian Hallam, also in the four-man team, the cycling representation here is made up almost entirely of manual workers.

David Wilkie's remarks soon after his record-breaking swim are a challenge both to the British educational system and to the whole system of competitive sport. "Had I gone to a British

university I would have quit swimming," he said. "One doesn't have enough time free of study to train four hours a day. I can do that at Miami." Since this is probably true of other swimmers, it could lead to a greater number of students trying to get into American colleges.

Seven of the team in Montreal are already United States based, although some are near the end of their courses. At least six others lead to a greater number of students trying to get into American colleges.

Wilkie's success here, much as it may encourage many youngsters, has nothing to do with either British educational or British swimming methods. He is a product of the United States' hot-house and the feedback into British pools is virtually nil.

Rolan Brinkley, the swim team captain, said early in the games that he did not believe it was necessary to go to America to succeed, but Wilkie's gold medal will be more persuasive.

We have in Britain a vast age group system, the purpose of which is to produce top grade competitors. It certainly does this on a limited scale although many coaches object to the early competitive pressures of manual workers.

But compared with the Americans and the East Germans it amounts to little at an Olympic level. Many people, like myself, feel that this does not matter, but I doubt it will be the view of the Amateur Swimming Association.



Nadia Comaneci: self-assured.

Crash courses in swimming

A big campaign to teach children to swim started in the Midlands this week.

Thousands of children are being offered 10-lesson crash courses under a scheme organized by the Birmingham Post, newspaper and local authorities in the Midlands. It is the seventh year of their "learn to swim" campaign.

Daily attendance is essential to keep up with the instruction. A nominal charge of £1.25 has been made to cover admission to the baths.

A number of baths in Birmingham will be used for the lessons. Other places include Redditch, Dudley, Kidderminster, Stourport, Lichfield, Ashborne, Sandwell, Sutton Coldfield, Solihull, Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon and Leamington Spa.

Sports Council may ask for their money back

The Sports Council is asking the London Borough of Croydon for assurances that a new £130,000 school sports hall will be open after school hours for public use as agreed when the council granted its construction.

The sports centre attached to the new Sylvan High School, Croydon, will be finished next year. Last week, Mr K. J. Revell, the borough's chief education officer, said: "We have deferred the decision on whether it should be open to the public until next year."

Though the newly dual-use centre at Monks Hill School was popular, the extra staffing, heating and lighting cost more than the public paid to use it. The new centre could mean a growth in spending when there was not supposed to be any.

The Sports Council's contribution to the new centre is small. At about £7,000, it is little more than half a squash court, and only a gesture of support for the dual-use idea which the council wants to encourage.

Now they are disturbed by recent suggestions that the con-

ditions of the grant may not have been met. Mr Mike Lockhart, a Sports Council regional officer, said: "We are pretty upset about it. We are anxious that our investment should be protected. The terms of the grant were that the centre was to be open to all."

Just what the council's reaction would be if these terms were not met he could not say. It would, he said, depend on a decision by the full Sports Council and might have to go back to the Department of the Environment, which is the council, for a ministerial decision. One possibility is that the council may ask for their money back.

Under the original dual-use plan, £92,500 of the cost would be met by Croydon's parks committee budget. This covered what was specifically for public recreation.

Mrs Margaret Campbell, chairman of the committee, said no change in that plan had yet been discussed by any committee, but it was not to be opened for community use if the building cost would all fall on the education budget.

Through to gymnastics finals

The first batch of girl gymnasts have won their way into the finals of a new national competition in which the girls choose just one piece of apparatus which suits them best rather than being obliged to tackle all four Olympic exercises. Regional qualifying rounds began in June and eight girls are already through to the finals at Crystal Palace on October 3.

Tackling the asymmetrical bars will be Suzanne Bando (Cotford County School, London) and Caroline Maskrey (Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Mansfield); vault finalists are Trudie Butt (Charles Edward Brooke School, Camberwell, London) and Valerie Naylor (Journian North School, Leicester).

Treading the beam will be Laura Wynne, of Honor Oak School, London, and Carole Gladders, of New Parks Grammar School, Leicester; floor specialists are Jackie Quirk (Alwynd School, Peckham, London) and Jean Knight (Tipton High School, Chesterfield).

Each section will eventually have 13 contestants.

Coaches: Mrs Meg Warren and Mr Tom Johnson have been chosen by the British Amateur Gymnastics Association to accompany the Mirror scholarship winners Liz Jackson and Chris Smith on their trip to Moscow in August.

Mrs Warren, once a national champion herself, is in charge of all the British junior squads. Liz and Chris, who goes to Blackfen School, Sidcup, Kent, are from the Letchworth Club.

Likewise, Mr Johnson, an international in the early sixties, took Chris Smith (Springhead School, Northfleet, Kent) as coach and pupil at Bexley Gymnastics Club.

Track cycling catches on

Track cycling has become as much a school sport for youngsters in South London as football and cricket. It began 12 years ago when the Inner London Education Authority sent an instructor around the schools to promote it, and the sport has caught on to such an extent that 42 schools now regularly attend lessons in the skills of racing on a steeply banked cycle track at Herne Hill Stadium.

The four instructors, all qualified British Cycling Federation coaches, train up to 1,000 pupils a week in classes lasting one hour. Mentally retarded children and also those with impaired sight take part as well.

Some of the boys have made phenomenal progress since being introduced to a bicycle for the first time through these classes, notably

Maurice Burton from Roger Mott School, Forest Hill, who became a senior national champion and was short-listed for the Olympics. David Pittman, Joe Chris, Tony James, David Peachey and Russell Williams are all now riders of top national and international calibre.

As many as 50 cyclists can be on the track at the same time. All the cycles are provided at the track and maintained by the instructors, Mike Armstrong, David Cressy, Peter Corry and Ray Harrod, the former international road rider.

John Clarey, a physical education teacher, takes classes on Monday. When the school term ends, a four-week holiday "school" gets underway to maintain continuity.

Michael Coleman



On the track at Herne Hill.

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Progressive schools

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Poetry; sociology

19/21

Books: literature; politics; history textbooks

22

Resources: history; art

23

Talkback: supply teachers; travellers

Who are the progressives now?

On the next three pages,
Julian Brotherton considers whether the progressive schools are still pioneers/
Frances Farrer looks at Dartington Hall
on its fiftieth birthday/Mark Featherstone-Witty visits Scotland's first free school

The old dissenters

Julian Brotherton

Some pioneer independent schools, once proud to call themselves progressive, would now win a little at the word. Yet they cannot find another label for what they believe they provide as an alternative to orthodox education.

Most of them, like St Christopher or Holles, broke away with true revolutionary spirit half a century or more ago from the appallingly rigid and punitive schools of that period. They were a tiny fraction, and still are, but they had a prodigious influence on the humanising and broadening of education. It is possible that the new child-centred primary schools could not have come into being without this influence, and secondary schools have felt severe shockwaves. However, the one-time pioneers, of top national and international calibre, are now a shadow of their former selves.

As many as 50 cyclists can be on the track at the same time. All the cycles are provided at the track and maintained by the instructors, Mike Armstrong, David Cressy, Peter Corry and Ray Harrod, the former international road rider.

John Clarey, a physical education teacher, takes classes on Monday. When the school term ends, a four-week holiday "school" gets underway to maintain continuity.

Michael Coleman

While pupils in progressive schools are given compulsory lessons and are expected to obey orders (however gentle and understanding) from the teachers, the libertarian avant garde of all schooling to be voluntary and truly democratic, or even

liberal.

It is understandable that the progressive feel slightly embarrassed at being associated with this title. When they originally reacted against competitiveness, the emphasis on the academic, and the opposite direction to individual freedom, emotional development, happiness and the arts, they were burning with a faith in natural phenomena which was never quite the same after the Second World War.

However, recent soul-searching has, perhaps surprisingly, resulted in a modest new wave of self-confidence—a reassurance of still having something to offer and different to be proud of. But it is more subtle now. The element of

protest has gone, the missionary blaze is low—even in the few truly egalitarian schools—and the more paternalistic of the one-time pioneers have settled down into being virtually part of orthodox.

So what, if anything, is different about the few still distinctively progressive schools? In the field of personal relationships which they first set out to change, the radical progressives still score over other types of school.

Their striking informality, something different even from that in a good local authority primary school, is experienced by visitors either as threatening and self-indulgent or else as refreshingly personal and honest, depending on the visitor's viewpoint. There is a strongly individual atmosphere. Any community, of course, develops an "ethos", woven from the partly accidental conjunction of certain individuals over a period of time.

This is perhaps nearer the truth than to suggest that ethos is a product of clear-cut, external sociological structures, such as self-government, boarding or co-education. Even the obvious element—the size of a community—does not tell us much. Small communities, schools included, are not necessarily informal or individualistic. The well-known organizational fea-

Now we are fifty:
a moment from the anniversary celebrations
at Dartington Hall earlier
this month
(see next page)

There is a curious backlash in some self-regulating, liberal schools, where social constraints and sanctions at least as powerful as any imposed from above derive from peer-group pressures, and the surprising rigidity of child society. In the total setting of a residential school the quality of life, whatever determines its nature, is pervasive and inescapable, amounting to a kind of conditioning of the inmates.

Whatever the goals, the scope for implementing them in a boarding school is obviously much greater, but the specific effects of boarding as such are unproved and speculative. Coeducation in the classroom is accepted, but the idea of sharing of living quarters, operated in varying

degree of self-government, for example, of which there now exist many variants in schools, has always been a feature of progressive schools. The school council can be an inspiration or it can be a sham. It can even be another vehicle for manipulation. But for those children motivated to participate (in what to many adults, too, is intrinsically boring), democracy can facilitate trust and friendship.

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degrees in progressive schools, still seems alarming to many people. However, the progressives, once so daring, have now been left behind by the teenage revolution, and can appear almost puritan.

What is different about pupils in these schools? They will tend to be self-confident; a new teacher realizes for the first time that children elsewhere must feel sadly insecure with adults. Whether this confidence is the same thing as maturity is doubtful, but it is unquestionably a precondition for this. It also influences the classroom, which in other respects is usually quite orthodox—the progressive schools have mostly made a ready enough compromise with the examination system.

Classroom drudgery was once a deliberate preparation for a hard life to come. We still live in a vale of tears, but we have changed our views on how to prepare for it. Teachers feel obliged to make work enjoyable. Nevertheless, how far as Herbert Read, who declared that "Education is the generation of happiness".

Both Liam Hudson and Robert Skidelsky have recently made the startling suggestion that "a well-adjusted childhood may be a recipe for a well-adjusted mediocrity", as if a more indulgent upbringing really is, in some sense, debilitating. Was it J. S. Mill who would rather have been "an unhappy Socrates than a happy pig"? Unhappiness is productive of creativity. But would anyone be so perverse and presumptuous as to set about designing a stressful setting for children?

I do not think a thoughtful child, carrying its own burden of unease, as it inevitably will, is likely to be desensitized by living in an individualistic school. It could be strengthened to make more sense of life. The preparation which many of us need most is, of course, for failure, loss and death. In particularly working to strengthen a child's individuality, perhaps these schools do help to build the necessary resources. All this is a long way from many I.e.s. secondary schools, which are often overloaded with difficulties, overcrowded and unwieldy, with teachers struggling to uphold what is valuable, but often feeling quite inadequate.

Since Bidegall, the progressives are more distrustful and less willing to compromise with the state. Many fear that the official educational enterprise is rapidly becoming more manipulative and vocational, and only incidentally pursuing activities which are worthwhile in themselves. This, of course, is probably in accordance with the wishes of most parents, but it is a move away from true education in the direction of social engineering.

There often seems to be an alarming premium on conformity, but the progressives still favour the nonconformist. No school could possibly suit every type of child, but I.e.s. already pay for numerous children in progressive schools, and would like places for many more. The unsatisfactory word maladjusted now covers many kinds of need for special placement.

Some I.e.s. children come under this heading; others do not. They are probably unusual individuals, perhaps falling severely in large or traditional schools, needing much more attention and often more freedom. They may simply need a homely setting. Teachers in these schools sometimes feel overwhelmed with misfits, not to say disruptives, but on the other hand, they have good cause for pride in participating in this effective social service.

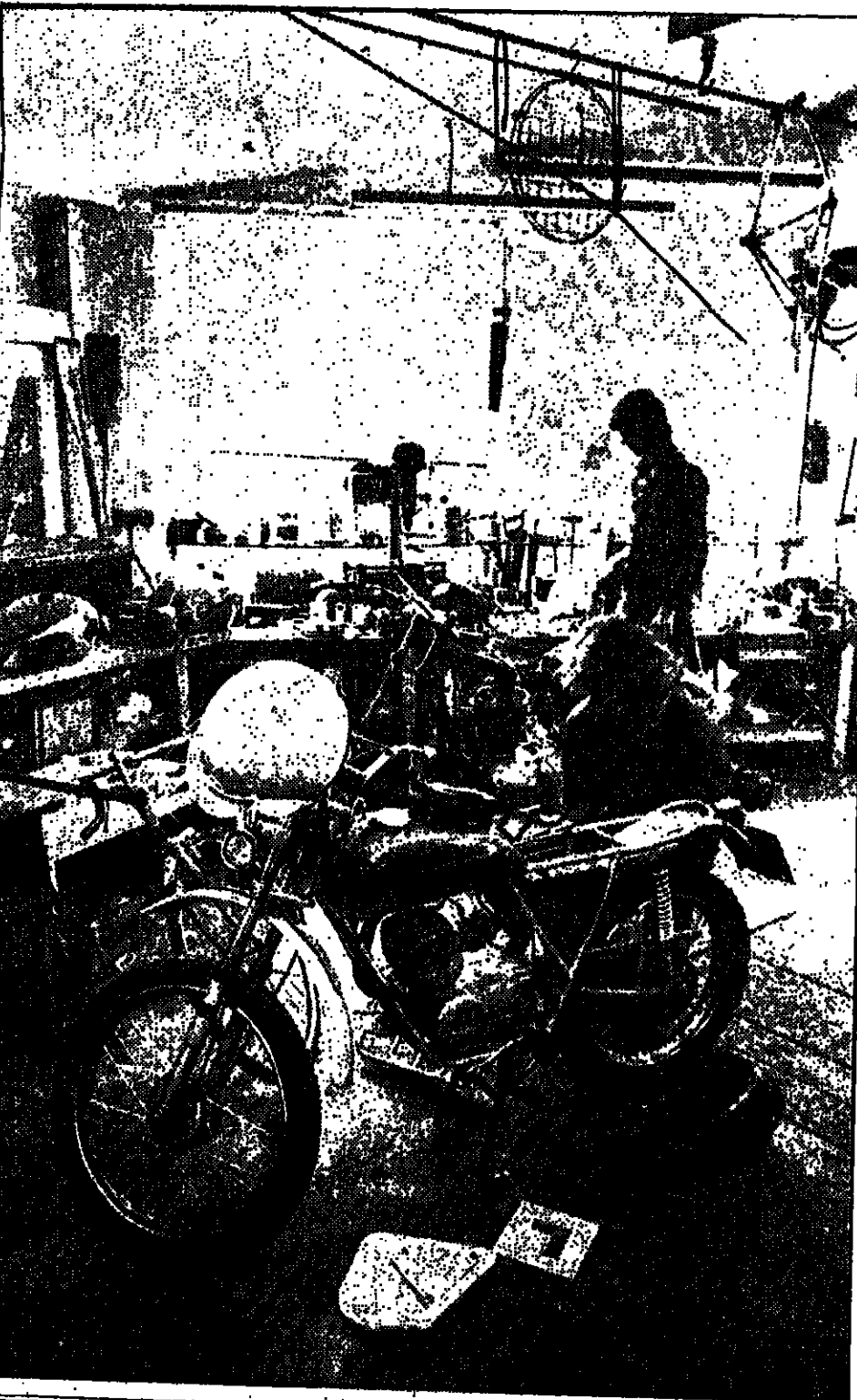
The progressives do remain a source of imaginative thinking, still undoubtedly reaching more into the larger world than they drift off. Maurice Ash has suggested that they are more than ever relevant. There does still seem to be a function, however non-measurable, even if there is no longer a mission to fulfill.

Schools are far warmer and more humane nowadays, but perhaps teachers in progressive schools are more concerned with individuals as they now age and less with shaping and guiding them towards the future. The humanity of the teacher can get through more readily there. Royston Lambert's research concludes that in pastoral work, these schools are the most efficient of all.

Julian Brotherton, who taught for ten years in a progressive boarding school, now teaches at John Keats Special School, London.

People, not automatons

Frances Farrer



Extended home

Mark Featherstone-Witty

Just before the start of the Second World War, a young scoutmaster visited Summerhill. "I was bowled over by what was happening. I saw boys and girls living together with grown-ups without the authoritarian approach, and doing exactly what Baden-Powell had proposed youngsters should be able to do."

Within two years, John Aitkenhead had cashed in all his worldly goods to find the first year's rent for the first free school in Scotland. This year the mortgage on Kilquhanity House School in Kirkcudbright has been paid off.

On a weekend in the July heatwave, Dartington Hall School celebrated its golden jubilee. One of England's most famous pioneer progressive schools invited its ex-pupils back for a couple of days of nostalgic socializing, and a programme of events which looked amazingly similar to every other old boys'/girls' reunion at every other private school. There were exhibitions, ex-pupils v Dartington CC, a barbecue, stalls, a garden party and a film about the founders. But some of Dartington's essential differences

from other schools came through in the manner of the weekend. The celebrations were the idea of ex-pupils' addresses through very real traumas. The head, John Wightwick, invited them either to participate in a weekend or contribute to a commemorative publication. After that there was to have been little organization or structure. "People here just have ideas and offer to do things," said Mr Wightwick, his secretary, "they just seem to sort of happen."

What happened looked, for most of the time, like an up-market pop festival. Pupils, pupils and staff, dressed to a son in denim or printed cotton, milled amicably about, or sprawled on the grass eating health food. Babies and dogs were universally welcomed. Children sold their own brand of elderflower champagne and silver jewelry, the school newspaper, a jumble, or six chances to throw a sponge at other children's faces. The boys effectively busked the food queue, playing guitar and kazoo. A male six-former, awesomely reported to have worn a frock, ran a dart game called "Hit da Tit", involving a board of potted bosoms.

In the biology lab some staff and children had set up an activity exhibition where people could test their hearing, see reflexes, make discoveries about the senses of sight and smell, and have a map of Britain drawn to their embarrassingly incorrect ideas about distance. "I've really got educated in 10 minutes here," said one pupil.

Exhibitions of photographs of pupils and staff past and present raised predictable cries of delight and despair. In the art room, some excellent work was on show. There were superb fabric designs in line drawings and graphics from the CSE class. "They do CSE rather than O level art, because the syllabus is often more interesting," says Ruth Ash, a daughter of the founders. "Most of them get grade A, and it's more fun."

Dartington's reputation for art is indisputable. Who else, by appealing for works to sell, could mount an exhibition including paintings by artists such as Ben Nicholson, Hein Ilchroth and Mark Tobey? When it was founded, the encouragement of self-expression and the appreciation of art were among its guiding principles. The Dartington Estate was the inspiration of Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst. It was to be a Utopian rural community employing and housing artists and craftsman, setting up country industries such as weaving, and cultivating the land and woods. "Millionaires build a dream colony," said the *Sunday Referee* at the time.

Leonard Elmhirst had worked with Rabindranath Tagore, while Dorothy had been influenced by John Dewey and worked in the slums of New York. She inherited a fortune when she was 17, and is quoted as saying that this "led me to feel that I was economically privileged, and that wealth entailed social responsibility". The activities on the estate were to be run profitably by a trust, to provide funds for other projects.

The underlying philosophy of the school came straight from A. S. Neill. John Aitkenhead explains: "Children should be free to find themselves. This means a whole approach, not of permissiveness, but of a genuine meeting of person to person." This led to his belief in a small school, despite the emphasis this places on the older pupils to set the mood of the school.

There are 50 in this coeducational boarding school, ages ranging between eight and 18, with 15 staff, seven of whom teach full-time. "People say big schools allow diversity of experience. The youngsters there are like people in a department store: see everything, touch nothing. Diversity of experience comes paradoxically when you can enjoy the depth of one relationship. In the human environment, small is beautiful."

One expression of a person-to-person meeting occurs in public: the council meeting. Every Thursday the school gathers in the eating room under the chairmanship of a different senior pupil.

The first item on the agenda during my visit was the spud machine, which was broken. A replacement could cost anything between £30 and £100, which the school could not afford. Were people prepared to carry on peeling by hand? Would people accept spuds in their jackets? In the end they decided to go for the latter solution.

After discussion, problems are decided by a straight vote. One boy complained that some boys were calling him names and pulling on his belt so that he could not breathe easily. The council listened to the aggressors and considered a fine (which John Aitkenhead and his wife Morag favoured). In the end, only a strong warning was given: retributions among pupils in private are not common.

The council meetings can be long, but there is no shirking of attendance. Mike Todd, a science teacher, makes the point: "We make the kids feel useful by giving them responsibility. Kids should be aware of problems, and encouraged to exercise tolerance."

The achievement of the council meeting should be seen against the number of maladjusted pupils in the school. From the start, there were two main pressures

Dartington Hall School was to be an integral part of the estate, and the children were to take part in the work, such as weaving and farming. Buildings were restored or created as necessary, were restored or created as necessary, were restored or created as necessary. "When A. S. Neill's annoyance: 'When I need a new wing he writes out a cheque to Heals!'" he grumbled. School life was to be made up of work, art and education with, as in contemporary progressive, coeducation, and emphasis on relationships, developing the individual personality, and democratic decision-making. "This school is for adventure," said its first prospectus.

The school opened in 1926 with nine pupils, and its first head, W. B. Curry, was appointed in 1931. He served for 25 years and shaped the philosophy and style. The idea of the children working on the estate was considered impractical and dropped. Relationships between staff and pupils were to be friendly and courteous, there were to be no punishments, competitions or exams, and few rules. The children were to have quite a high degree of self-government through their parliament, the moot.

This balance has remained, with slight adjustments. At the jubilee old Dartingtonians remarked enthusiastically how similar everything is. "Of course, they're more exam-minded now," said one, "but in our day there were more back doors into university... It's as good as it ever was, it produces people rather than automatons. Of the well-known progressives this philosophy has changed the least."

Naturally, the school aroused hostility in the early days. One ex-pupil, invited to tea with his tutor at Oxford, was told "that place has nothing to offer education whatever". People were outraged at the freedoms, of which the nude bathing (in a swimming pool dug by the children) became legendary. It was reported in *Tatler* that the children had been seen sitting naked on a wall, pelting teachers with tomatoes. Ex-pupils seem rather proud of this mythology. "Of course, we were different," they say. "We went in different, so we came out different."

There were other differences between this and other old pupils' weekends. Ex-Dartingtonians camped in a field with some of the school's younger children, who had lent their rooms to guests, with perfect harmony across the generations: lines of ex-pupils perched on every wall, sketching furiously; the jazz sit-in, a jam session of ex-pupils and staff, produced reasonable jazz and rather a good party.

What do current pupils think about the system? The 14-year-old daughter of a teacher at Dartington College of Art was moved from the local comprehensive. "You feel more responsible here," she said. "You're treated in a much older way. You all have a say. I had two years at my other school but I didn't get on with the teachers. I just messed about. I'm doing much better now."

As her father is a trust employee, this pupil's fees are slightly reduced. About a quarter of Dartington pupils receive scholarships or subsidies from the school, some others get help from charities, and a few from local authorities. The fees are among the top six in the country. Although the head says that the parents

to take the school south of the border nearer population centres, and to make it a school for maladjusted pupils. John Aitkenhead decided against both, the latter since "it would have killed the experiment," for Neill was concerned with the psychology of a sick society.

Both for educational reasons and to help cash flow, Kilquhanity started a farm in the war years, a benefit John Aitkenhead sees reaching into the heart of the school. "The tempo that animals produce is salutary. You cannot chase on the time of calving or farrowing or hatching. Also animals cannot talk; therefore they cannot cheat. Today too few school lessons provide such integrity of experience."

Between a quarter and a third of the pupils have been referred to the school by local authorities, who would, if allowed, fill it completely. If these pupils provide their share of behavioural difficulties for the school to ease, they also provide cash—a year's fee is £1,150. Parents of private pupils are asked to assess themselves. A fee of £600 has been accepted in this way, while another pupil was kept on free when her parents could not pay.

are not particularly rich, it is clear that Dartington parents come overwhelmingly from the professional classes. "A lot of us come from grandparents or insurance policies, or they quite genuinely make some sacrifices to send kids here. We are concerned that the fees don't go up and up and up, and there should be more of a social mix within the school. The trust are prepared to help us take more estate children. They've financial year." This autumn, Dartington will be launching an appeal to ex-pupils for

more scholarship funds. Their exchange scheme with a Conisborough school lost the financial support of the I.e.s. and John Wightwick is anxious to continue it. Another concern is the size of the sixth form, which was enlarged to about 100 under the previous head, Royston Lambert. "I would like to moderate the size of the sixth to about 80 over the next few years," says John Wightwick. "At the moment, the school's rather unbalanced with too many people doing exams." He does not foresee many curriculum changes. Dartington has a Mode 3



While old and new pupils test their sense of taste at the weekend barbecue, or that of smell at one of the stalls, a sixth-former (left) stays with his motorbike

Photographs by Rio Gemmell

nate the youngster's school life." Past pupils include thatchers, stone dykers, market gardeners, university students, furniture builders, lawyers and journalists. "Nearly every walk of life except the armed forces".

Because of the importance given to person-to-person relationships, there is an atmosphere at Kilquhanity as remarkable as it is hard to define. The unreality which characterizes many teacher-pupil relationships is absent. No mock dignity, no false respect, and an evident lack of fear.

Kilquhanity, like Summerhill, is a mecca for those interested in education from all over the world. John Aitkenhead, who has a place on the Scottish Nationalist Party education committee, sees the school as a centre of experiment, an example of an alternative.

"I am always aware we have no right to violate the parents' place, so I've no feeling that boarding is a natural thing to do. Better a school like this down the road, part of a small community, an extended home. Every educational area should have an alternative school. Why not have a real choice of schooling in a democratic society? Why pay taxes for schooling you may not agree with?"

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